

Chapter No. 2185  
15/SS26/R1096  
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***SENATE  
CONCURRENT RESOLUTION  
No. 610***

Originated in Senate



Secretary

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 610

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION HONORING THE ORIGINAL MISSISSIPPI MEMBERS OF THE BLACK STUNTMEN'S ASSOCIATION FOR THEIR EFFORTS IN CHANGING THE FACE OF THE MOVIE INDUSTRY IN HOLLYWOOD AND ON TELEVISION BY GIVING BLACK STUNTMEN AND WOMEN AN OPPORTUNITY TO HAVE CAREERS IN AN INDUSTRY WHERE THEY WERE PREVIOUSLY EXCLUDED AND RECOGNIZING THE HISTORICAL FOUNDING OF THIS ASSOCIATION AND THE COALITION OF BLACK STUNTMEN AND WOMEN.

WHEREAS, a group of African-American stuntmen, athletes and extras founded the Black Stuntmen's Association in Los Angeles, California, in 1967 to combat racial discrimination and create equal opportunities for all people of color in the motion picture and television stunt industry; and

WHEREAS, the Coalition of Black Stuntmen and Women was formed in 1973 to continue the fight against racial bias in the industry; and

WHEREAS, motion picture and television productions at the time commonly featured white stuntmen and women as stunt doubles for African-American actors and those of other races; and

WHEREAS, African-Americans were routinely denied job opportunities and formal training in the stunt industry due to lingering racism; and

WHEREAS, the increased use of African-American actors in motion pictures and television in the 1960s brought more attention to the common industry practice of using only white stuntmen and women; and

WHEREAS, the Black Stuntmen's Association and the Coalition of Black Stuntmen and Women pursued legal action to bring additional diversity to the motion picture and television industry and continued to monitor compliance with the resulting agreements; and

WHEREAS, the original members of the Black Stuntmen's Association and the Coalition of Black Stuntmen and Women paved the way for greater racial equality in the motion picture and television industry in the ensuing years, but in many cases were unable to benefit from their hard-won victory; and

WHEREAS, Willie Harris (73), who grew up in the Holmes County Community of Howard, Mississippi, is President of the Black Stuntmen's Association. Only 14 of the 22 original members are still alive. In addition to Harris, two others are Mississippians: Henry Grady from Meridian, Mississippi, and Dewitt Fondren of Walls, Mississippi; and

WHEREAS, the efforts of the Black Stuntmen's Association and the Coalition of Black Stuntmen and Women also helped tear down

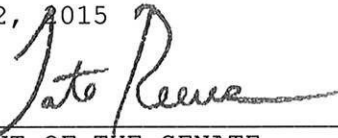
discriminatory barriers and prejudices in other parts of the motion picture and television industry, both in front of and behind the camera; and

WHEREAS, members of the Black Stuntmen's Association and the Coalition of Black Stuntmen and Women have made a significant and lasting contribution to the quality of motion picture and television productions in the United States:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN, That we do hereby recognize the historic founding of the Black Stuntmen's Association and the Coalition of Black Stuntmen and Women, and honor the contributions of these organizations and their members in the fight for racial equality and justice in the motion picture and television industry.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to representatives of the Black Stuntmen's Association, forwarded to the Mississippi Development Authority Movie Incentive program, and made available to the Capitol Press Corps.

ADOPTED BY THE SENATE  
March 12, 2015

  
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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

ADOPTED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
March 17, 2015

  
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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES